

DIKE

PRACTICE INTRODUCTION

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service - practice code 356



DIKE

A dike is an embankment constructed of earth or other suitable material to protect land against overflow or to regulate water.

PRACTICE INFORMATION

This practice is used to prevent or reduce flood damage to land and property. They are also used in conjunction with floodways for flow control or to impound or regulate water for fish and wildlife management. Dikes can also be used to protect natural areas, scenic features and archeological sites from damage.

Dikes are divided into classes determined by the value of the land, crops, and other improvements and the hazard to life within the area to be protected. The classes are described as follows:

1. Class I - These dikes are constructed on sites where failure may cause loss of life or serious damage to homes, commercial buildings, public utilities, high value crops, and other similar improvements. Protection

is needed to withstand more than 12 feet of water above normal ground level.

2. Class II - These dikes are constructed in highly developed and productive agriculture areas where failure may damage a few isolated homes, highways, minor railroads, or cause interruption in service of relatively important public utilities. The maximum design water stage against the dike is 12 feet.
3. Class III - These dikes are constructed in rural or agriculture areas where damage from failure of the dike would be minimal. The maximum design water stage against the dike is 4 feet to 6 feet depending on construction material.

In designing and locating dikes, careful consideration is given to preserving natural areas, wildlife habitat, woodland, and other environmental resources. In addition, the plans always require establishing a protective cover of grass on all exposed areas of the dike and other disturbed areas.